

HERSETH SANDLIN STATEMENT ON USDA IMPLEMENTATION OF SURE DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Long-awaited announcement ensures much-needed relief available for producers

December 24, 2009, Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Herseth Sandlin welcomed the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announcement that it will begin implementation of the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments program (SURE), the central component of the new disaster programs established in the 2008 Farm Bill, on January 4, 2010. SURE provides crop disaster assistance payments to eligible producers on farms that have incurred crop production or crop quality losses.

“SURE is a critical component of the farm safety net, ensuring that producers have a guaranteed source of assistance when disaster strikes,” Rep. Herseth Sandlin said. “With the implementation of SURE, producers will no longer have to wait for ad hoc assistance which often comes years after the crop losses occurred. As we are currently seeing with the blizzard across the state, and the rains and flooding earlier this year, the need for a permanent and reliable disaster program is extremely important for our farmers and ranchers across South Dakota.”

In October, Rep. Herseth Sandlin hosted Secretary Vilsack in northeastern South Dakota where he witnessed firsthand the crop losses incurred by producers due to the heavy rains and flooding earlier this year. During his visit, Rep. Herseth Sandlin urged the Secretary to complete the rulemaking and begin implementation for all the disaster assistance programs as quickly as possible. The SURE program is the largest of the disaster assistance programs established in the 2008 Farm Bill.

To be eligible for SURE, producers must have suffered at least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance. In addition, producers must meet the risk management purchase requirement by either obtaining a policy or plan of insurance, under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or NAP coverage, for all economically significant crops. Rep. Herseth Sandlin added, “I urge all producers to visit with their local FSA office as soon as possible in January to sign-up for SURE so they can begin receiving much-needed relief.”

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